

Going Together

When we were growing up, having a boyfriend or girlfriend was called going together. It was actually quite an insightful term and one that is often lost in marriage. The daily stress and challenges we all face can easily distract us from a common goal and purpose, and ultimately pull us in competing directions. The result is that we are going separately into life's challenges and not together.

One of the greatest challenges that couples face and can pull them apart is parenthood. The fastest growing group for divorce is empty-nesters, and nearly two-thirds of married couples with children express that they feel less close to their spouse than they did before children. It is not uncommon to hear couples say that after the kids moved out, they felt that they didn't know each other and no longer had anything in common. They grew apart.

Why does this happen? We believe that many of the couples that find themselves in this situation have tried to balance marriage and parenthood; instead of integrating them. They have a fear that somehow their children will cause them to longer focus on their marriage, and cause them to grow apart. Ironically, the way they tend to deal with it causes exactly what they are trying to prevent. The reason is that mothers tend to have a unique connection with their children that cannot be separated from who they are. They go into parenthood. When the husband does not go with his wife into this new experience, she often feels isolated. The husband also experiences a similar feeling of isolation. Having children is a natural part of marriage and should be celebrated and viewed as a further bond in the marriage, not a competition.

Whether you are facing the challenges of parenthood or other struggles, it is important to look to each other and say that you are going together. As long as you go together, you won't need to worry about growing apart.

Blessings,

Brian and Trudy

But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.

- Ruth 1:16